



Amazing Grace

Vic Reasoner

We ascribe all good to the free grace of God. According to John Wesley, we deny all natural free will and all human ability prior to God's preliminary grace. What grace transforms in our lives excludes any personal merit. Therefore, justification must be by grace through faith. At this point Wesley declared that he did not differ from John Calvin "a hair's breadth."

However, in working out our theology of grace, we do differ from Calvinism on four important points. We believe:

1. Salvation is possible for everyone.
2. God grants everyone the power of contrary choice.
3. Faith is God's gift; believing is our responsibility.
4. God delivers from sin.

SALVATION IS POSSIBLE FOR EVERYONE

Despite all of the double-talk, in the end, Calvinism does not believe that the atonement of Christ so extends to all mankind as to make salvation possible for them. They typically resort to saying that God has two wills: a revealed will and a secret will. According to his revealed will, he desires that all mankind be saved. According to his secret will, he has predestinated only the elect.

Adam Clarke argued that if humanity is of one race and if Christ took on himself the nature of man and made atonement for the sins of

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"Grace is the source, faith the condition, of salvation." —John Wesley

humanity, then redemption is general, and the benefits of his death must apply to every human being. "All who share the human nature have a right to apply to God, by virtue of that redemption, for the remission of sins."

GOD GRANTS EVERYONE THE POWER OF CONTRARY CHOICE

Calvinism claims to affirm the freedom of the will, but no one else holds their definition of freedom. They hold that mankind does

not have the ability, naturally or supernaturally, to choose anything other than sin.

John Fletcher phrased his question to cut through the confusion: "Is the will at liberty to choose otherwise than it does, or is it not?" Ultimately, Calvinistic "freedom" amounts to determinism, which is usually called "bondage." God does not relinquish his sovereignty, and he has predestinated the consequences of our free choices. But he also created mankind with true freedom. Fletcher explained Wesleyan theology in two axioms, "All our salvation is of God in Christ; all our damnation is of ourselves."

FAITH IS GOD'S GIFT; BELIEVING IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY

Both Wesley and Calvin affirm our total inability to save ourselves. According to Calvin, since man is totally depraved, salvation is the

Sanctifying Grace

John N. Oswalt



Dr. John Oswalt is both a preacher and a teacher. His expertise and primary interest is in the Old Testament, and his passion is to promote the message of full salvation. In January, he began his role of interim president of the Francis Asbury Society. In this article he cuts through debates over terminology and goes to the heart of the matter.

Across the years, one of the stumbling blocks to a full understanding of grace for many people has been the phrase that became a standard in many Wesleyan confessions: entire sanctification is the result of “a second definite work of grace.” They have pointed out that it is difficult to find Scriptural warrant for two works of grace. That being said, if one wants to be very literalistic, it is not easy to find Scriptural warrant for a “first work of grace.” Let me hasten to say that there is plenty of evidence to show that we come into a redeemed relationship with God through grace—and through grace alone. But the point is that if we put the means whereby the process of salvation is accomplished into the terminology of “work,” the evidence is not very clear at any point.



“We are expected not merely to try to be holy but to *be* holy.”

So what shall we say about grace and sanctification? The first thing to say is that *the relationship between the two is absolutely vital*. This is the great contribution of the Wesleyan movement to Christian doctrine. The idea that a holy life was necessary to Christian faith was at the heart of the Roman Catholic expression of that faith through the Middle Ages. The holy life was correctly understood from Scripture. It was a life in which the cardinal virtues: chastity, temperance, charity, diligence, kindness, patience, and humility ruled. But increasingly these were seen to be the result of human effort, the outcome of the destruction (“mortification”) of the bodily desires (“the flesh”).

Martin Luther tried to comply with this program, believing that to the degree he achieved it, he would have peace with God. But although he drove himself to greater and greater efforts, he did not achieve the desired peace. He could not come to a place where he was truly righteous (justified) before God.

Then he discovered in the Bible that we are not justified through effort but through God’s grace, which Christ’s death makes available. It was this insight that sparked the Protestant Reformation: peace with God is ours by grace received through faith. However, the unintended consequence of this great move was that the expectation for actual holy living came to be downplayed. Since it was judged not necessary for justification, and, in Luther’s experience, not really achievable anyway, it was relegated to the status of a worthy goal to be striven for but not expected to be reached prior to death, when the sinful nature would finally cease to exist in the believer.

But while John and Charles Wesley rejoiced in the good news of justification by grace through faith, they could not accept the supposed corollary that holy living was not expected in any real sense in this life. That they could not is the result of their careful and intense reading of the Bible. Clearly, at least from Leviticus 11:44 and 45 if not earlier, we are expected not merely to *try* to be holy but to *be* holy. That is, we are expected to behave like God does. But if nothing else were clear in the Old Testament, the experience of the Hebrew people shows that behaving like that is not possible for human beings, not even for those completely dedicated to God.

So what is to be done: admit that the Lutherans were right and that the biblical expectations are simply unachievable? No! The Wesleys completed the theological revolution that Luther had begun but stopped short of carrying to its logical conclusion. Not only are we justified by grace but we are sanctified, enabled to live holy—godly—lives by grace! Clearly, God’s goal for us is not merely that we are delivered from the consequences of our sins but that our characters are transformed so that we can live in untroubled fellowship with him (Eph 1:4). Grace, and grace alone, makes both of these possible. It is only the gracious power of God that can defeat the sin principle in us that is so powerfully described in Genesis 6:5. Until that principle is defeated, until that sinful way of thinking and relating is changed, all our efforts to live godly lives will fail, as Luther and countless others have discovered.

But the good news is that it can be defeated! Here is where the “secondness” of sanctifying

grace enters the picture. God’s grace, which the cross makes available to us, is a single all-encompassing reality. Everything necessary to defeat sin in all its expressions and power was accomplished in Jesus’ act of self-giving love on that Friday 2000 years ago. But it is in our appropriation of all that grace was meant to accomplish that a second moment is normally entailed. Why is that? It is because a person cannot believe for something they do not know they need. The typical person who accepts Christ has no inkling of the sin principle at work within them. They expect that they will simply go forward in Christ’s good way. It is only after they have attempted to walk in that good way for awhile that they discover within themselves a will that is determined to have its own way. As long as that will corresponds to Christ’s, everything is fine, but if a conflict should arise, that will is *determined* to have its own way. What has happened? The person has not appropriated *all* of Christ’s grace because he or she did not know they needed more. Now, in a second act of believing and receiving, they experience all that Christ died to give them: the glorious freedom to live God’s life: self-giving, self-denying love, integrity, kindness, generosity, patience, humility. Sanctifying grace. ✠

The Grace of God in the Atonement of Christ

Richard Treffry, Jr. (1804–1838)



Dale Dunlap wrote of the early Methodists, “The Atonement was the heart of their theology; it was the theme of their preaching; and it was the practical ground of their Christian living and hope of glory.” Treffry was the son of an esteemed Methodist local preacher. After his health prevented him from traveling his circuits in London and Yorkshire, he began writing to refute error faced by the Methodists. His book, *Letters on the Atonement*, first published in 1839, contains a series of 16 letters to a friend struggling with Enlightenment

teachings of that day. This book has been reprinted and is available through FAS. Here is an excerpt, edited lightly for modern readers.

The Scriptures represent the work of salvation, from first to last, as effected by grace. We have no more direct claim upon the grounds of justice, to any good in consequence of the atonement, than we should have had in the absence of that atonement. We are commanded to repent and amend our lives, and we have imparted the power necessary to obedience; but neither repentance nor reformation produces pardon. We are commanded to trust in Christ; but neither is there any merit in the act of trust. Faith procures salvation by the appointment of God, but there is no more debt to a believer on the part of God than to an infidel. God, it is true, binds himself by his promise to connect salvation with the exercise of faith; but his promise is a promise of grace, and its fulfilment, therefore, must be an act of grace.

Now, the great object of the atonement of Christ was to demonstrate the righteousness of God, and thus to enable him, without any dishonor to his attributes and government, to show mercy to the sinner. In order, therefore, that God might prove himself just as well as good, Christ was appointed to undergo, in his own person, the punishment due to our sin.

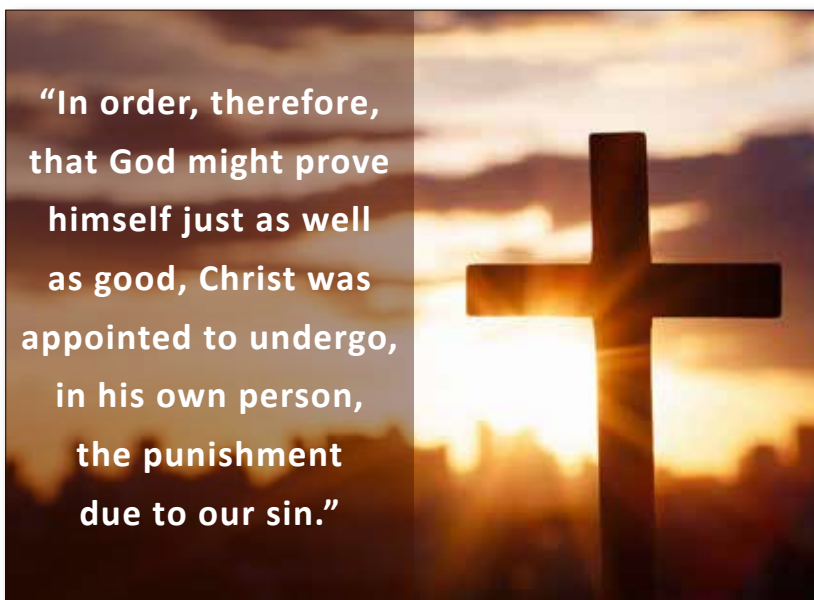
In immediate connection with the obedience of Christ is a covenant by which God binds himself to reward the infinite merit of his Son. The reward, which Christ claims, is the salvation of all that believe; and, as this may now be effected without disgrace to the divine law, the demand of the Savior is ratified, and God engages thus to honor his Son to all ages.

The gift of the Holy Spirit is the immediate result of the mediation of Christ. To this gift, therefore, the mediation of Christ is necessary; and, as these result from his expiatory sacrifice, it follows that, had there been no such sacrifice, the influences of the blessed Spirit could not have been vouchsafed to man. The human race, therefore, might have been punished; but their punishment would have failed to secure those divine communications by which alone they could have shunned the evil and secured the purity of which the divine law testifies. Apart from the atonement, we are doomed to a condition of perpetuated depravity, of hopeless and impotent sinfulness.

But by the vicarious and meritorious suffering of Christ, every barrier to our partaking of the restoring grace of the Spirit is removed; and the gift of blessing is therefore made a matter of distinct provision in the covenant of the gospel. The energy of the Spirit’s influence,

which we may partake, is not limited except by our necessity; and the method for securing it is as simple and easy as its effect is delightful. The instruction, the conviction, the guidance, the adopting, the sealing, the comforting, the sanctifying of the Spirit are each and all ensured to us by the most clear and specific promises; and it may be safely affirmed that, unless God had withdrawn the power of moral agency from man, he could not have more amply provided for his deliverance from pollution than he has by the gift of the Holy Ghost through the expiatory work of Christ.

The doctrine of the Apostle Paul in the eighth of Romans is most appropriate to this subject. He thus expresses it, “For what the law could not do” by its sanction—“in that it was weak through the corruptness of the flesh”—God has done by “sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh,” as our teacher and example. Through Christ, God “hath condemned sin in the flesh”—that is, he has given an evidence of the guiltiness of sin far beyond what the law could effect, by inflicting upon Christ in human nature the punishment due to human guilt—“that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”



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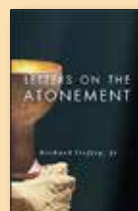
The inefficiency of the law is attributed to the depraved condition of human nature. Such is the blindness of the mind, such the insensibility of the heart, and such the depravity of the inclinations of man, that no legal enactment or condemnation, even if it were that of all mankind, could succeed in producing the impression of the purity of its nature or in securing human obedience. But, to remedy this inadequacy of everything legal, God sent his Son and caused him to possess the actual nature which had sinned and in this nature to become a vicarious

sacrifice. Thus did he exhibit the purity of his nature and government, and evidence the certainty of the condemnation of all who adhered to their sin. And all this was done that we might be supplied with that degree of moral motive, and of the Spirit’s influence, by which we should be enabled to fulfil the righteousness of the law.

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Letters on the Atonement

By Richard Treffry, Jr.



\$11.99 (Paperback; 174 pages)

In this book, Treffry directs loving pleas to a friend teetering on the edge of the abyss of apostasy, and his contentions are appropriate for our day. Jesus himself warned that false teachers will arise in the Church, and every generation must be on guard against their toxic doctrines. Since the days of the apostles, believers have affirmed the truth of Christ’s atoning sacrifice. It remains a bedrock foundation for the Faithful. This is in-depth reasoning that is considered, sound, and authentically scriptural.

Grace as Pardon and Power

Cliff Sanders



Mid-America Christian University named Dr. Cliff Sanders, ministry professor of more than 29 years, as professor emeritus in 2021. This article, taken from his book, *The Optimism of Grace* (MACU Press, 2016: 116–122), is used with permission. In it Dr. Sanders takes grace beyond forgiveness and explains its transforming power.

Wesley understood salvation to be a matter of grace from beginning to end (prevenient grace, to justifying grace, to sanctifying grace). In fact, it is Wesley's optimism of the work and power of grace that keeps him grounded in the soil of the Reformation and even affirming the total depravity of human beings, yet all the while also affirming the power of God's grace to bring about transformation in people's lives. Wesley is clear about human depravity and the utter inability of human beings to respond to God by one's own power. But Wesley is just as clear when it comes to the power of God's grace from within that is able to change the sinner. For Wesley, sin is a horrible reality of human existence, but the grace of God is a powerful reality that is greater than any human failure or sin. It is this optimism of grace that distinctly characterizes the work of Wesley.

"Wesley clearly believed that grace involved more than mere pardon. It [grace] was the transforming power of God in human life," wrote Randy Maddox. Wesley believed this because he was a careful and holistically thorough student of the Bible. He saw God's grace transform people of authentic Christian faith. In fact, as Mildred Wynkoop so aptly observed, "Grace is all that God is in relation to man which would include forgiveness, mercy, new creation, and shared life with God." Certainly God's grace involves forgiveness and pardon, but it is not limited to such—for instance, it must include provision for living in fellowship with God and others. Salvation, after all, according to Steve McCormick, "is not just what God does 'for us'; it is also what God does 'in us.'"

God's grace works in us to rectify our love, to stabilize our affections, and to empower us with new desires that come from God. So it is not the idea of solace that molds Wesley's view of grace; rather, his view of grace is one of power.

Albert Outler was the first to advocate that Wesley's legacy in the Christian tradition was in his "third alternative." This "third alternative" seems to be no less than a biblically inclusive understanding of grace on Wesley's part:

By "the grace of God" is sometimes to be understood that free love, that unmerited mercy, by which I, a sinner, through the merits of Christ, am now reconciled to God. But in this place [2 Cor 1:12; Phil 3:8] it rather means that power of God the Holy Ghost, which "worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure." As soon as ever the grace of God in the former sense, his pardoning love, is manifested to our souls, the grace of God in the latter sense, the power of his Spirit, takes place therein. And now we can perform, through God, what to man was impossible.

Wesley asserted that God's grace was not just his favor or kindness expressed in the forgiveness of sin, although this is one central understanding he had of grace. No, grace was also the empowering of God in the lives of those who had been forgiven of sin and are now new creations that have God's grace, by way of his presence, in their lives so as to enable them to live transformed. Wesley is in line with Augustine here, who asserted that, after regeneration, God's cooperating grace "now collaborates with the renewed human will in achieving . . . growth in holiness."

But Wesley was no mystic when it came to his understanding and practice of the Christian life. He did not see the power of grace as some nebulous force in the universe. John Wesley understood the power of grace in terms of the means of grace. In "The Means of Grace," Sermon #16, Wesley explains: "By 'means of grace' I understand outward signs, words, or actions, ordained of God,

and appointed for this end, to be the ordinary channels whereby he might convey to men, presenting, justifying, or sanctifying grace."

We have all experienced (whether we are conscious of it or not) what might be called the incidental means of grace. This is an experience we have when we are discouraged or feeling weak spiritually but then hear a song on the radio or receive a text message from a friend telling us that they are praying for us. In other words, we have an experience where we are strengthened or encouraged by something that we did not know was going to happen or were not able to anticipate happening. Many of us can identify an experience like this that may have changed the direction of our lives or given us enough strength to get through a very difficult circumstance.

Though we have all experienced this incidental means of grace, we cannot really live in or have grown in grace by these means; these means are unpredictable and random at best. As a professor, many students have confided in

me, after my teaching about this particular experience of God's power in grace, that they have lived their entire Christian lives depending on such incidental means of grace. They now see that there are more reliable ways to experience God's grace as power, such as what Wesley called the *instituted* means of grace.

So, what did Wesley understand that God had ordained as the *instituted* means of grace to experience the grace of God as power?

The chief of these means are prayer, whether in secret or with the great congregation; searching the Scriptures (which implies reading, hearing, and meditating thereon); and receiving the Lord's supper, eating bread and drinking wine in remembrance of Him: And these we believe to be ordained of God, as the ordinary channels of conveying his grace to the souls of men.

These instituted means of grace, or acts of piety, however, cannot be reduced to some formulaic process. They must be participated in and practiced by dependence upon the Holy Spirit. Wesley is



"For Wesley, sin is a horrible reality of human existence, but the grace of God is a powerful reality that is greater than any human failure or sin."

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Wesley's Optimistic View of Grace

Vinicius Couto



Dr. Couto is an ordained elder in the Brazilian Church of the Nazarene, where he serves as senior pastor in First Church of the Nazarene in Vinhedo and as professor of Historical and Systematic Theology in Brazilian Theological Nazarene Seminary. It has often been said that Wesleyan theology is pessimistic about the sinful nature of mankind but optimistic about divine grace. In this article Dr. Couto explains the basis for that optimism.

An interesting starting point for analyzing the optimistic view that Mr. Wesley had about the grace of God is his letter of May 14, 1765, addressed to his friend John Newton. In this letter, Wesley presents convergences and divergences with the Calvinist system. At first, he claims that he doesn't differ from John Calvin "a hair's breadth." The context is the doctrine of justification. Wesley was convinced that this divine work could only be wrought by grace through faith. In order to clear up any misunderstandings about his opinion, Wesley mentions in the letter his sermon #17, "Circumcision of the Heart," preached on January 1, 1733. In this sermon we can see that his opinion is close to Calvin's also regarding the effects of original sin on unregenerate man, as he himself testified. The natural man "is alive unto the world, and dead unto God." And: "We are convinced. . . that we are not able to help ourselves; that without the Spirit of God we can do nothing but add sin to sin." In this case, Wesley affirmed an anthropological pessimism.

That man cannot save himself can be seen in several other texts by Mr. Wesley, such as his sermon #38, "Original Sin"; his book *The Doctrine of Original Sin: According to Scripture, Reason, and Experience*; and sermon #43, "The Scripture Way of Salvation"; plus many others. If, on the one hand, Wesley agreed with Calvin on the doctrines of original sin and justification, on the other hand, he stated in the letter that he disagreed with predestination and sanctification, given that he professed the doctrine of Christian perfection. It is precisely in the latter case that Wesley hints at his optimistic view of grace. While Calvin maintained a soteriological pessimism, that regenerated man remains bound by sin, Wesley speaks of a powerful sanctifying grace that promotes "salvation from *all sin*, and loving God with an *undivided heart*." In another text, sermon #107, "On God's Vineyard," Wesley even praises the German reformer Martin Luther regarding his contributions to the doctrine of justification but weaves a scathing criticism of him regarding his weakness regarding the doctrine of sanctification, saying: "Who has written more ably than Martin Luther on justification by faith alone? And who was more ignorant of the doctrine of sanctification, or more confused in his conceptions of it?"

The point is that, for Wesley, the grace of God is just as powerful to save from the temporal effects of sin in this life as it is from eternal damnation. It is powerful in bringing about both relational (in justification) and otological (in sanctification) changes. It works both for us and in us. Because of this, Wesley cannot admit that sin is a necessity, an obligation in the Christian's life. So he explains in sermon #17:

Such a [saving] faith as this [imparted by grace] cannot fail to show evidently the power of him that inspires it, by delivering his children from the yoke of sin, and "purging their consciences


from dead works"; by strengthening them so that they are no longer constrained to obey sin in the desires thereof; but instead of "yielding their members unto it, as instruments of unrighteousness," they now "yield" themselves entirely "unto God, as those that are alive from the dead."

In his letter to Newton, Wesley reinforces this belief and adds that the grace of God assists not only in the moral practices of holiness but also in all our actions, giving "utmost clearness of having *one design, one desire, one love*, and of pursuing the *one end* of our life in *all our words and actions*."

The prophetic mission in John Wesley's ministry can be seen through his teleological understanding of the restoration of the image of God and of the role of the Christian in the kingdom of God. His perspective of the kingdom of God was not limited to something future and millenarian, but it covered the present moment. This is because this kingdom has an inner aspect (Mark 4:26), being present in the heart of every true believer (Luke 17:21), and therefore of a double nature: inner (in the heart of believers) and with its apex in glory (cf. John 3:3). In the case of the earthly aspect, Wesley understands that there is God's intervention, for the kingdom cannot be understood as something merely existential, as do liberation theologians and

many theologians of the Integral Mission (Matt. 20:1). However, the kingdom of God also has a future reality, that is, it involves eternal salvation (Mark 10:24). This aspect is also important because the existentialists end up devaluing eternity with Christ, reducing salvation to social issues.

Finally, the grace of God makes it possible for the born-again believer to do good works. Thus we understand Wesley's emphasis on works of mercy and his engagement with various social



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agendas of his day such as the abolition of slavery, health care, the proper use of money, prison rights, etc. Wesley's theology favored the notion of performing good works, recognizing that saved people were prepared to do them beforehand. In his *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament*, Wesley comments on the text of Ephesians 2:10, stating that this verse "proves both that salvation is by faith, and that faith is the gift of God" and that all believers must practice good works, "though not be justified by them." In his brief commentary on Ephesians 2:10, Wesley affirms both his pessimistic anthropological view and his optimistic view of grace. Wesley's anthropological pessimism was important for emphasizing human inability and for placing God's grace as central to the *via salutis* (way to salvation). In that sense, we can claim that his view of grace is optimistic, and we can testify that it is *charicentric* (grace-centered).

Thus, the Wesleyan view of the optimism of grace for the redeemed generated their responsibility in the active and present participation in the kingdom of God. That is why Wesley said in a prayer that "All [Christians]. . . may seek, in their several stations, to right the oppressed, to comfort the afflicted, to provide for the poor and needy, and to relieve all those that are in any misery." Wesley understood from the parable of the sheep and goats that every true Christian must do works of mercy (Matt. 25:35-46) and that every natural talent can be used in the service of the kingdom of God, as long as it is accompanied by the knowledge of the Scriptures and a fervent spirit (Acts 18:24). ✠

The Case for Preventive Grace

Brian Shelton



Dr. Shelton is the chair of Christian Studies & Philosophy, as well as the Wesley Scholar in Residence, at Asbury University. This article is excerpted from his book, *Prevenient Grace* (Francis & Taylor, 2014) and used by permission. Dr. Robert Peterson, who co-authored *Why I Am Not An Arminian*, in which he questioned the doctrine of prevenient grace, ten years later wrote, “Dr. Shelton makes a wide-ranging and impressive case for Arminian prevenient grace.” Here, Dr. Shelton very clearly explains its importance.

The principle of prevenient grace explains how God mitigates human sinfulness enough to exercise saving faith in Christ. This grace does not save by itself, it does not cause repentance, and it does not replace any need to understand the gospel. Prevenient grace simply makes possible the freedom component that is necessary for belief. In the words of Jacob Arminius, “The ability to believe belongs to nature; believing, to grace.” The human problem is that ever since Adam, sin has marred natural human ability to do spiritual good of its own accord—even to genuinely believe in God. Scripture seems clear about the detrimental effects of the Fall: people are hopelessly depraved and unwilling to surrender their lives in repentance, without a hope of saving themselves.

Even after the “good news” of the New Testament gospel, which announces the free gift of eternal life, sinful people still must be penitent to receive the gift. Unfortunately, like the rich young ruler, people selfishly prefer to hold on to sin so that repentance runs counter to human nature. The situation is as if humankind is caught in a vicious circular predicament—a “Catch-22” in which they cannot get the saving grace of God until they repent, but they cannot righteously repent until they get the grace of God. We therefore sympathize with Paul’s frustration with sin in Romans 7:24, “Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from this body of death?” How can people get past their own selfishness enough to exercise saving faith in Christ?

Fortunately, God provides grace to humankind by Christ’s death and resurrection to break this vicious cycle, enabling people to recognize his love and sacrifice in Jesus and to surrender their lives to him. In systematic theology this provision is called “prevenient grace.” After people exercise this divinely given opportunity, they can declare with Peter in Acts 15:11, “But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus,” because this faith is the gracious work of the Spirit enabling our free wills enough to repent.

From the outset, it must be clear that this is in no way a human program of work. Prevenient grace proposes that Christ’s atoning work enlightens people in a way that natural revelation, or their fallen image of God, could not do alone. The biblical idea of such an “enlightening” grace allows for the New Testament to speak not of saving grace as a divine predestination of the individual to be saved but as God’s gracious opportunity for every individual to be saved.

Christian history has evidenced that believers have always struggled with the dilemma of divine grace and human free will. Figures in church history regularly have sought to construct various biblical explanations of how it is that spiritually depraved creatures can believe the gospel and repent. The dispute about this “initial enabling” phenomenon underlies much of our modern Calvinism-Arminianism debate, in which our only hope for salvation comes by divine predestination if God does not enable all people to repent according to the gospel command. It is a bold and risky claim, but if the doctrine of prevenient grace is not a biblical or a real notion, then Arminians everywhere may as well yield to Calvinism. For Reformed believers, the explanation of predestination to salvation is completely satisfactory. Yet, many other believers find the predestination explanation neither entirely logical nor necessarily biblical. For example, C.S. Lewis describes such logic this way: “A world of automata—for creatures that worked like machines—would hardly be worth creating. The happiness which God designs for His higher creatures is the happiness of being freely voluntarily united to Him.” The fact that this phenomenon of gracious enabling happens to all people and not just the predestined elect is the doctrine of prevenient grace.



“The fact that this phenomenon of gracious enabling happens to all people and not just the predestined elect is the doctrine of prevenient grace.”

The phrase “prevenient grace” has not been without confusion. The term “prevenient” is from the Latin *prevenere* “to go before,” so named because it precedes every act of believing faith that a Christian might execute. The term “prevenient grace” is not found in the Bible, but the concept is noticeably there. It is an historical term that is specifically used by well-known writers such as Aquinas, Arminius, and Wesley. John Wesley, the most elaborate articulator of the doctrine, sought to be *homo unius libri*, “a man of one book,” so one can expect that he thought prevenient grace must (and does) follow an attempt to read Scripture faithfully. Wesley believed that the Holy Spirit comes to every person before repentance, enabling him or her to believe in Christ for salvation in spite of the competitive human depravity. He

was able to affirm Scripture’s insistence on human inability as well its insistence on the absolute merits of Christ’s work to save us—so that he is in line with the important Reformation doctrine of salvation by grace through faith. Charles Rogers sums up the doctrine perfectly from John Wesley’s perspective, “For Wesley, prevenient grace left a person in a condition of depravity and inability, yet provides the foundation to participate in the process of salvation.” Thus, the doctrine of prevenient grace offers a link—a solution—to the logical disconnect between human spiritual depravity and the necessity to believe for salvation.

The difficulty lies in discerning exactly from Scripture the means by which we come to receive this gift of gracious enabling. Traditionally, systematic theology describes how the Holy Spirit applies the Son’s work, in this case transferring the love of Christ to the human heart in order to enable it. Scripture teaches that grace precedes salvation,

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Free Grace

John Wesley (1703–1791)



Wesley contended for universal redemption by faith. Although other authors have cited John Wesley in this issue of *The High Calling*, this article is a compilation of his most significant statements on grace, as compiled from Sermon #1, “Salvation by Faith”; Sermon #110, “Free Grace”; Conference Minutes from August 1745; and Sermon #85, “On Working Out Our Own Salvation.”

All the blessings which God hath bestowed upon man are of his mere grace, bounty, or favor: his free, undeserved favor, favor although undeserved, man having no claim to the least of his mercies. It was free grace that “formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into him a living soul,” and stamped on that soul the image of God, and “put all things under his feet.” That same free grace continues to us, at this day, life, and breath, and all things. For there is nothing we are, or have, or do, which can deserve the least things at God’s hands. “All our works, thou, O God, hast wrought in us.” These therefore are so many more instances of free mercy: and whatever righteousness may be found in man, this is also the gift of God.

Wherewithal then shall a sinful man atone for any the least of his sins? With his own works? No. Were they ever so many or holy, they are not his own, but God’s. But indeed they are all unholy and sinful themselves, so that every one of them needs a fresh atonement. Only corrupt fruit grows on a corrupt tree. And his heart is altogether corrupt and abominable; being “come short of the glory of God,” the glorious righteousness at first impressed on his soul, after the image of his great Creator. Therefore, having nothing, neither righteousness nor works, to plead, his mouth is utterly stopped before God.

If then sinful men find favor with God, it is “grace upon grace!” If God vouchsafe still to pour fresh blessing upon us—yea, the greatest of all blessings, salvation; what can we say to these things, but “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!” And thus it is. Here God commendeth his love toward us, in that, “while we were yet sinners, Christ died” to save us. “By grace” then “are ye saved through faith.” Grace is the source, faith the condition, of salvation.

How freely does God love the world! While we were yet sinners, “Christ died for the ungodly.” While we were “dead in sin,” God “spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all.” And how “freely with him” does he “give us all things!” Verily, free grace is all in all!

The grace or love of God, whence cometh our salvation, is free in all and free for all. First, it is free in all to whom it is given. It does not depend on any power or merit in man; no, not in any degree, neither in whole, nor in part. It does not in any wise depend either on the good works or righteousness of the receiver; not on anything he has

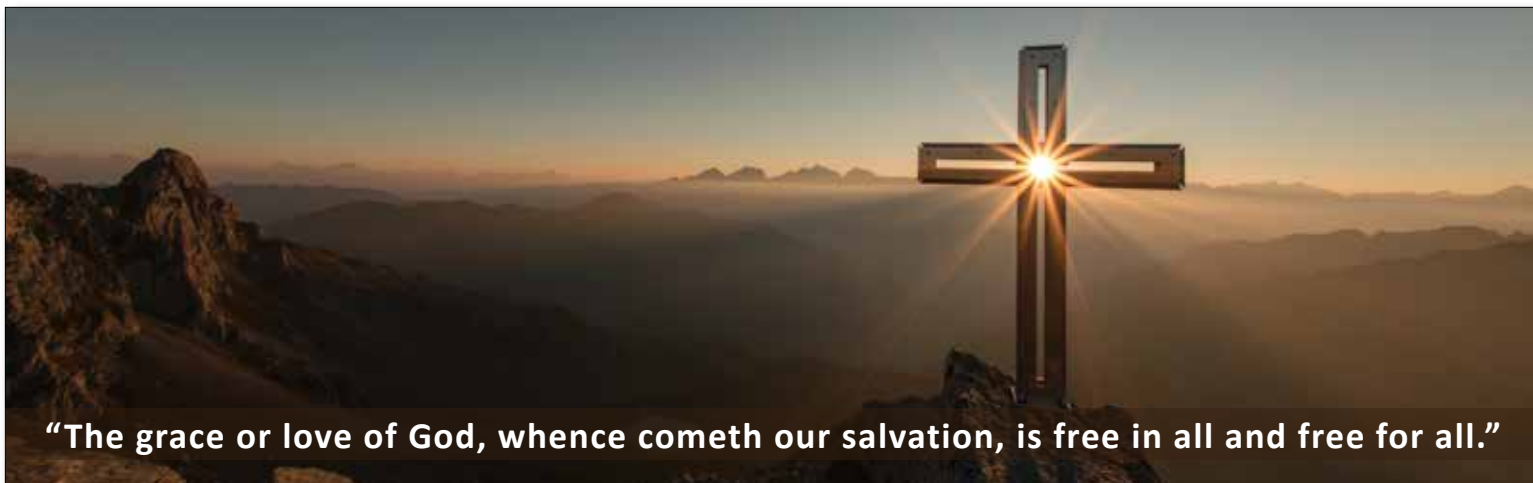
done or anything he is. It does not depend on his endeavors. It does not depend on his good tempers, or good desires, or good purposes and intentions; for all these flow from the free grace of God. They are the streams only, not the fountain. They are the fruits of free grace, and not the root. They are not the cause, but the effects of it. Whatsoever good is in man or is done by man, God is the author and doer of it. Thus is his grace free in all, that is, no way depending on any power of merit in man, but on God alone, who freely gave us his own Son, and “with him freely giveth us all things.”

But is it free for all, as well as in all? To this some have answered, “No: it is free only for those whom God hath ordained to life, and they are but a little flock. The greater part of mankind God hath ordained to death; and it is not free for them. Them God hateth; and therefore before they were born decreed they should die eternally. And this he absolutely decreed; because so was his good pleasure, because it was his sovereign will. Accordingly, they are born for this: to be destroyed body and soul in hell. And they grow up under the irrevocable curse of God, without any possibility of redemption. For what grace God gives he gives only for this: to increase, not prevent, their damnation.” This is the blasphemy clearly contained in “the horrible decree” of predestination. And here I fix my foot. On this I join issue with every asserter of it. You represent God as worse than the devil—more false, more cruel, more unjust.

But what decree? Even this: “I will set before the sons of men life and death, blessings and cursing; and the soul that chooseth life shall live, as the soul that chooseth death shall die.” This is worthy of God. It gives us the noblest view of his justice, mercy, and truth. To this agrees the whole scope of the Christian revelation, as well as all the parts thereof. Thus Ezekiel, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear (eternally) the iniquity of the father. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.” Thus our blessed Lord: “If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink.” Thus his great Apostle, St. Paul: “God commendeth all men everywhere to repent.” “All men, everywhere”—every man in every place, without any exception, either of place or person. Thus St. James: “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.” Thus St. Peter: “The Lord is . . . not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” And thus St John: “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, . . . and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.”

Wherein may we come to the very edge of Calvinism? In ascribing all good to the free grace of God. In denying all natural free will and all

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“The grace or love of God, whence cometh our salvation, is free in all and free for all.”

The Classic Arminian Doctrine of Predestination

Robert E. Picirilli



Dr. Picirilli is professor emeritus at Welch College. This excerpt is from his book, *Grace, Faith, Free Will* (Randall House, 2002). In this article, he carefully walks us through some important theological distinctions, explaining free grace, divine sovereignty, foreknowledge, and predestination. Dr. Picirilli is gracious toward those with whom he disagrees but helps us understand our own Arminian foundation. Used by permission.

Calvinists and Arminians agree, for the most part, that:

1. God is sovereign. No conditions can be imposed on God from outside himself. Nothing other than his own nature limits his freedom to act according to his own good pleasure.
2. God is creator and preserver of all that exists outside himself, so that all that is—including all that happens—is in accord with his will, his plan for the history of the created, subordinate, sustained universe.
3. God is omniscient, and the implications include: (1) that he knew all possible contingencies; and (2) that from all these he decided or willed what is.
4. No force exists except that which is subordinate to God and cannot thwart his will.
5. God is the source of all good and is alone deserving of glory.
6. Man is created and wholly governed by God.
7. Man is fallen and thoroughly depraved and therefore capable of no good apart from the work of God to enable him. One may add (and I think the Calvinist will agree) that this needs some clarification. Fallen man is neither capable of any good that would justify him before God nor is he capable of any absolute good. Even so, fallen man continues to be in the image of God and the recipient of common grace and general revelation. This means that he is capable of relative good, of doing and thinking things that are relatively worthwhile and noble. He exists, in other words, in a state of contradiction and painful conflict, always falling short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23).
8. Salvation is wholly the gracious work of God, thus yielding no credit or merit to man. There is not room for “synergism” (the view that God and man work together to accomplish salvation).

If Arminians share, in large measure, the Calvinists’ concepts of God, man, and salvation, where do they part ways? There are at least three differences, as much matters of emphasis as outright disagreement.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CERTAINTY, CONTINGENCY, AND NECESSITY

Arminians agree that God knows all things that will be as certain and as in accord with his plan. But they insist that many of these certainties are truly contingent. To Arminians, Calvinists at least appear to deny that there really are true contingencies, things that can transpire in either of two (or more) ways. The Arminian insists that there are things that actually can go either of two ways, and yet God knows which way they will go. He knows all future events perfectly. This means that they are all certain, else he would not know what will be. Furthermore, it means that all future events are in

accord with his overall plan and purpose: nothing ever happens in his universe that is outside his knowledge or control or that thwarts his ultimate plan.

This is *not* contradicted by the fact that there are events that really can go in more than one way. The Arminian insists that there is no conflict between “certainty” and true “contingency,” although explanation of this requires a careful and technical discussion of three important terms: certainty, contingency, and necessity. The distinction between these plays an important role in the issues related to predestination.

All things that occur are certainly foreknown by God. Everything happening is certain and known as such by God from all eternity. Does this mean “What will be will be” (*Que sera, sera*)? Indeed, but the meaning of that set of words requires closer examination. The sentence is, in fact, like a mathematical equation with two equal sides. If I were to say that $4 = 4$, for example, I might well be accused of saying nothing.

The proposition “what will be will be” is exactly the same, nothing more than “what will be = what will be.” Everything that will happen will happen; and if I add “certainly” to the statement—“everything that will happen will certainly happen”—I have added nothing. The so-called certainty of an event means nothing more than its “eventness,” the simple fact that it will occur—and God knows it will.

The free acts of morally responsible persons are *contingent*. A contingency is anything that really can take place in more than one way. This freedom to choose does not contradict certainty. Certainty relates to the “factness” of an

event, to *whether* it will be or not; contingency relates to its *nature* as free or necessary. The same event can be both certain and contingent at the same time.

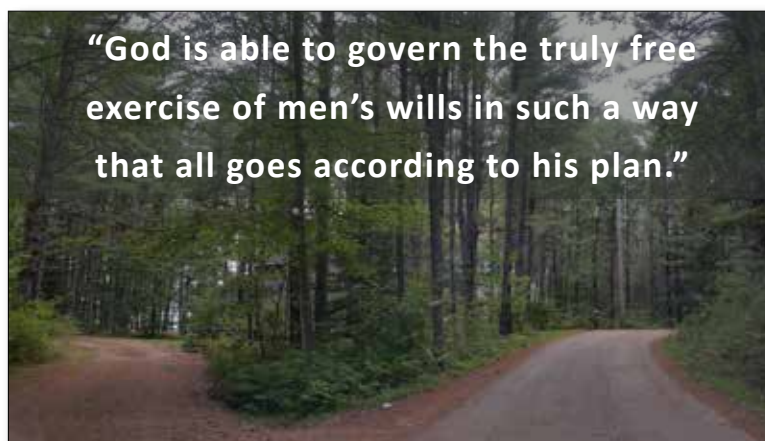
Events that can transpire in just one way, that must inevitably be the way they are, are said to be *necessary*. For such events there were causes leading to the event that allowed no freedom of choice, causes that necessarily produced the event. Whenever God, for example, “makes” something happen the way it does without allowing for any other eventuality, that event is a necessity.

The Calvinist errs on this subject in suggesting that God knows the future certainly only because he first unconditionally predestined it. But that is to confuse knowledge with an active cause and so in effect to take away contingency.

AN EMPHASIS ON THE NATURE OF MAN AS PERSONAL, NOT ONLY AS CREATURE AND FALLEN

Man is in the image of God, thus having—among other things—a *will* of his own. There is a will in the universe other than God’s: subordinate to him, yes, but a true will nevertheless. Were that not true, man would not be truly personal.

Man is free, as possessing a true will, to make real choices and decisions between two or more courses of action (true contingency,



Continued on page 11

and the Holy Spirit enables people in a way that their fallen image of God alone could not do. He graciously convicts people of their sins, softens their hearts, and thus allows them to repent. Still, the exact detailed phenomenon—the precise divine mechanism by which God applies preventive grace—is ultimately unknowable. Jesus seems to warn about trying to understand too much of the detailed intricacies of the Spirit’s mysterious ways in John 3:8: “The wind blows wherever it pleases . . . so it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” It is our task to gather and process the biblical data about the fallen human condition, the inability to believe, and the availability of saving grace for “whosoever would believe.” Meanwhile, our task must consider the mysterious aspects of the workings of the Holy Spirit depicted in the enabling process and in the calling to repentance.

Albert Outler suggests that preventive grace can be viewed in two ways: one general or wide and one specific or narrow. The former stresses how a prior initiative of God comes to all as a general call to repent and believe that was not available before. The latter stresses how grace precedes an individual’s salvation, a unique invitation of the Spirit to the heart of an individual. This two-part effect of grace is termed objective and subjective grace.

When considering the mystery of preventive grace, it is helpful to put this unique act by God into the larger perspective of providence and atonement. We ought to ask, how does this grace relate to the other forms of grace that we see? Heaven surely does not compartmentalize its grace, as if God dispenses a pinch of preventive grace one day and then a dash of saving grace several days later, with an ongoing dose of common grace. Instead, we speak about types of grace because of the way that they come to creation, or the type of effect they have on us. However, the forms are essentially the same grace in the sense that all are generous acts of a bountiful God, mysteriously working various effects without excluding other effects.

The same divine grace that enables people to believe is the same grace that saves, which is the same grace that brings cooling rains or a warming sun to a rebellious world with each new providential morning, which is the same grace which sanctifies the Christian.

In the way that grace extends to all people without discrimination, preventive grace might be understood as objective grace. It comes to creation in an impersonal, unbiased way, without prejudice to the recipient. Terms like “general” and “wide” describe its extent, because its goal is to affect all people. The doctrine of “common

grace” shares this aspect, depicted by God’s blessings in sustaining creation such as sunshine and rain, and perhaps in the universal ability to believe.

On the other hand, preventive grace can also be understood as subjective grace, acting on each human being individually. It comes to us in a personal, specific way with a profound effect on each of our hearts and minds. Subjective grace is the way that the Holy Spirit attends to an individual to lead him or her to repent and believe in Jesus for salvation. The Spirit comes to a person on a divine timetable: at just the right time and in the perfect way. When it comes to experiencing subjective grace, every believer’s story is different, as every Christian reports how God miraculously worked on his or her own heart at the time of conversion. The recognition of Christ’s grace dawned on Charles Finney one business day in 1821 *en route* to his law office in New York, when he retreated to a nearby wood, insisting “I will give my heart to God, or I never will come down from there.” Ignatius Loyola was seriously injured in 1521 when the French laid siege to his fortress, and during his recovery he recast his repulsive past life of the flesh and surrendered to Christ. Likewise, believers today share regularly about the divine “coincidences”—the circumstances and issues, the internal struggling and reflection that worked together in perfect timing that eventually led them to saving faith. This is what theologians call subjective grace because of the individual focus of the grace. This grace can accompany the more overarching objective grace, it can be actualized in the community of believers, and it ought to be understood as accompanying the comprehensive work of divine initiative, both directly and indirectly bearing on salvation.

Through this subjective work of grace, the Holy Spirit enables people to view their sins differently than before and to see their need for a savior (John 16:8). The Apostle John described this act as the Father “drawing” (John 6:44) and the Son “calling” (John 10:3) people. This is the specific working of God on the human heart to accept his lordship that lies behind so many evangelical testimonies of changed attitudes and a broken, repentant heart.

William G. MacDonald says of subjective preventive grace: “It is the first ‘new land’ that appears rising out of the chaotic welter of the old creation and is the *terra firma* on which we now stand (Romans 5:12) in justification.”

Back on the first hand, objective grace is more difficult to understand, and evidencing this divine work as biblical will be part of our special task [in this book]. Certainly, God’s grace extends objectively: “The Lord is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made” (Ps. 145:9, NRSV). Christians historically interpret Scripture to assert that, due to human corruption from Adam, any act of believing faith is impossible without God’s grace. The cause for this enabling is preventive grace, and Arminian scholars believe that its mysterious source lies with Christ’s work on the cross acting in a universal way. It is as if, in some mysterious and abstract way, God unilaterally enables people through Christ’s work on the cross to respond to the gospel. MacDonald insists, “The gospel, then, as objective grace, must have priority.” Human repentance and faith are “entirely shaped, then, by the word on which it is based.” It comes to each person irresistibly, a divinely initiated effect irrespective to human consent that seeks radically to alter the sinful, natural state of all people in their relationship to God. ✠

✠



Preventive Grace

By Brian Shelton, PhD



\$24.95 (Paperback; 281 pages)

Preventive grace has been a bone of contention between Wesleyan and Calvinist Christians for nearly five hundred years. However, Dr. Shelton traces the biblical and historical roots of this concept and concludes that it is vital to understanding how God reaches sinful human beings.

Amazing Grace continued from page 1

unilateral action of God. He sovereignly and irresistibly regenerates the elect, who are passive in the whole process.

Arminius and Wesley both taught that we are so bound by sin that, left to ourselves, our choices are always evil. But God has not left us to ourselves. His preliminary grace breaks the determinism of Calvinism. What they called “prevenient grace” enables the sinner to turn from sin and toward God. Augustine sometimes muddled the theological waters, but Wesley affirmed this “noble” statement from Augustine, “He that made us without ourselves will not save us without ourselves.”

However, Calvinism teaches that faith is passively received. They understand faith as monergistic (the work of God alone). While saving faith is a gift in the sense that the Holy Spirit enables faith, there must be human consent. Otherwise, justification is by divine decree and not by faith. Wesley argued that if salvation is by absolute decree, it is not by works, but neither is it by faith. “For unconditional decree excludes faith as well as works.”

Calvinists do not see faith as a condition of salvation, but instead they reduce it to a mere consequence of election. Adam Clarke explained that faith was both the gift of God and the responsibility of mankind. “Without the power no man can believe; with it, any man may.”

Calvinism denies this prevenient grace. They divide grace into “effectual grace” for the elect and “common grace” for the reprobate. Allan Coppedge explained what is at stake:

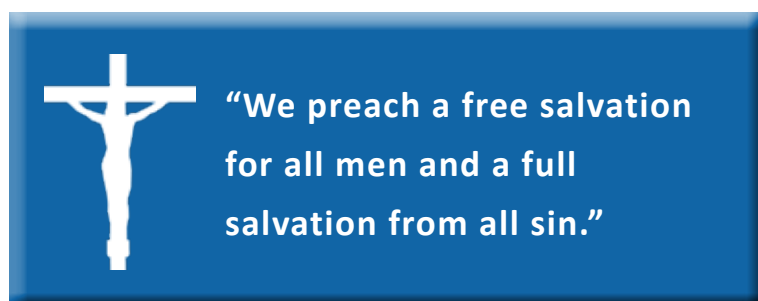
The difference between Wesley’s prevenient grace and the Calvinists’ common grace was that while both provided a restraining influence on the evil in human beings so that society could exist, prevenient grace also restored the capacity of every man to accept salvation, whereas common grace did not.

GOD DELIVERS FROM SIN

The atonement is both extensive and intensive. It is extensive in that it is available to all. It is intensive because it delivers from all sin. The grace of God extends as deeply as we are tainted by sin. Grace includes the forgiveness of sins, but it also means divine empowerment or enablement. Too often Christians have thought that obtaining forgiveness from God for our sins was the whole point, but as Steven DeNeff has said, we are enabled to keep the law of God because it is written on our hearts.

There is freedom from the guilt, the bondage, and the power of sin. There is also cleansing from the nature and pollution of sin. Preliminary grace works freely in all mankind—if only for a season. Justifying grace is available to all who respond to preliminary grace. And perfecting grace can deliver the justified from all sin. All this is denied by Calvinism.

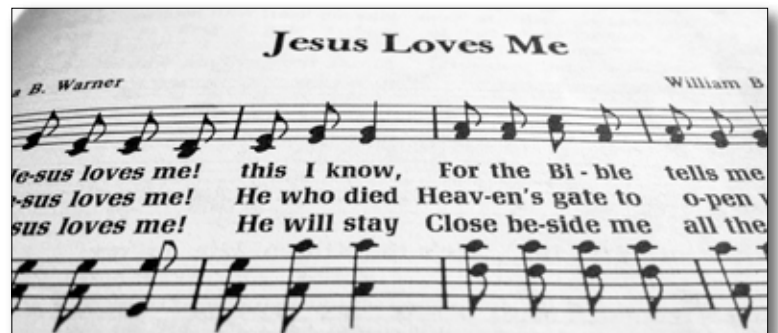
We need to return to the biblical doctrine of grace. Lawless preachers have cheapened grace. It has been tainted with extrabiblical rules by legalistic preachers. And it has been restricted by determinism by predestination preachers. We preach a free salvation for all men and a full salvation from all sin. This issue of *The High Calling* is intended to help us to understand the Wesleyan-Arminian theology of grace, rooted in biblical truth. ✠



The Grace of God in the Atonement... continued from page 3

The incentive in deterring from sin is the love of God shed abroad in the heart through the Holy Ghost given unto us. The Apostle Paul described its necessity and its excellence in 1 Corinthians 13. The Apostle John teaches us its origin: “We love him because he first loved us” (1 John 4:19). The lives of the first Christians exhibit its energy; and our acquaintance with human nature assures us that beyond this there is no higher moral impulse. Command his love and you have the man; and surely the love of Christ to us, in his vicarious sufferings, is, above all other things, infinitely energetic to the production of reciprocated affection. This is the true secret of Christian conduct. “God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him” (1 John 4:16). It is this which will sustain when all other supports fail; and when the heart is fully imbued with its spirit, it will turn away from all the fascinations of that which is sensual and earthly. Learn the loftiest virtue; and enjoy the liveliest hope.

When, in order to our redemption, the Son of God became incarnated and was subjected to the agony of the cross, the impression of the infinite purity of the divine nature became unspeakably more deep and vivid than it otherwise could have been. The songs of heaven might well be supposed to assume a deeper tone, and the spirit of angels to catch a more powerful inspiration of the divine character. Love would beget love; and the unveiling of the holiness of God in the work of redemption would kindle the noblest ambition in the noblest of all creatures. Such we know is the case with the human mind when brought under the due impression of the subject; and such, in a far higher degree, is likely to happen in the best born of the family of God. ✠



Free Grace continued from page 7

power antecedent to grace. And in excluding all merit from man; even for what he has or does by the grace of God.

Salvation begins with what is usually termed (and very properly) “preventing grace;” including the first wish to please God, the first dawn of light concerning his will, and the first slight, transient conviction of having sinned against him. All these imply some tendency toward life, some degree of salvation, the beginning of a deliverance from a blind, unfeeling heart, quite insensible of God and the things of God. Salvation is carried on by “convincing grace”; usually in Scripture termed “repentance,” which brings a larger measure of self-knowledge and a farther deliverance from the heart of stone. Afterwards we experience the proper Christian salvation, whereby “through grace” we “are saved by faith,” consisting of those two grand branches, justification and sanctification. By justification we are saved from the guilt of sin and restored to the favor of God; by sanctification we are saved from the power and root of sin and restored to the image of God.

If it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do, what need is there of our working? First, God worketh in you; therefore you can work—otherwise it would be impossible. Secondly, God worketh in you; therefore you *must* work. Even St. Augustine, who is generally supposed to favor the contrary doctrine, makes that just remark, “he that made us without ourselves will not save us without ourselves.” ✠

The Classic Arminian Doctrine... continued from page 8

again). A choice that actually can go but one way is not a choice and, without this “freedom,” there is not personality. This is not *absolute* freedom. It is not unlimited, unconditional, or sovereign, like God’s freedom. Arminius confessed this: “The will is, indeed, free, but not in respect to that act which cannot be performed or omitted without supernatural grace.” And he consistently insisted that “nothing good can be performed by any rational creature without this special aid of His grace.” But our depravity does not take away our endowment. Depraved man is still personal, and this endowment is part of personality.

God is the source of all good. Man is fallen and incapable of good. After all, God created the free will, so that even this endowment is gracious. Beyond that, God’s gracious work is necessary for man, especially fallen man, to perform any good. Consequently, the Bible everywhere holds man responsible to act for evil and for good.

AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE TENSION BETWEEN GOD’S SOVEREIGNTY AND MAN’S FREEDOM

Both Calvinists and Arminians, of course, claim to believe in both of God’s sovereignty and man’s freedom. Calvinists consider that Arminians, in effect, deny God’s sovereignty in order to affirm man’s freedom. Arminians consider that Calvinists, in effect, deny man’s freedom in order to affirm God’s sovereignty.

Arminians believe that there is no threat to, or restriction of, God’s sovereign freedom. He runs everything as he pleases by having another personal and free, although limited, being in the universe. And Arminians insist that therefore all our choices, which really are contingent, are incorporated into his plan, as he certainly foresees what those choices will be. Arminians consider that this view magnifies God’s omniscience. In the Arminian conception of the universe, God foreknows true contingencies. Man really can choose either of two ways and God really knows which he will choose.

It also magnifies God’s power. God was able to create a being who is not merely “determined,” but an actor who also “determines” things, a being who is free and in God’s own image. God is able to govern the truly free exercise of men’s wills in such a way that all goes according to his plan. ✠

The book cover features a large yellow number '7' in the center. To the left of the '7' is the text 'Deadly Sins' and to the right is 'Cardinal Virtues'. Below the '7' is a yellow banner with the text 'A STUDY OF CONTRASTS'. At the bottom, there is a list of seven pairs of contrasting virtues and sins.

Pride	Humility
Greed	Charity
Lust	Chastity
Envy	Patience
Gluttony	Temperance
Wrath	Kindness
Sloth	Diligence

Started January 24, 2023



Grace as Pardon and Power continued from page 4

clear on this point: “We allow, likewise, that all outward means whatever, if separate from the Spirit of God, cannot profit at all, cannot conduce, in any degree, either to the knowledge or love of God.” There is neither power nor merit in the means in and of themselves; “there is not *power* to save but in the Spirit of God, no *merit* but in the blood of Christ,” Wesley taught. Means of grace are to be used “*as means*; ordained, not for their own sake, but in order to the renewal of your soul in righteousness and holiness,” Wesley continued.

Wesley also emphasized the *prudential* means of grace, a few central acts of mercy that included “feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, entertaining or assisting strangers, visiting the sick or imprisoned, comforting the afflicted, instructing the ignorant, reproving the wicked, and exhorting and encouraging the well-doer,” as Paul Chilcote explained.

It seems followers of Jesus have found themselves either in the “camp” that declares God’s grace is solely for pardon or in the “camp” that declares God’s grace is for power. At least as I survey the landscape of many churches I have known or visited, I have come away with this sense. There seems to be little attempt to find a third alternative to the bifurcated viewing of God’s grace. But this alternative (grace as both pardon and power) is exactly where John Wesley is (with other theologians as well) in his theological and practical commitments. It is this alternative that seems to make so much sense of the message of the Bible on the subject of grace as both pardon and power. ✠

H. C. Morrison: Remember the Old Paths

By Ronald E. Smith, PhD



\$35.95 (Hardback; 394 pages)

Based on Dr. Smith’s doctoral research at Drew University, this biography of Henry Clay Morrison will be the new standard text. Ron utilized primary sources from Morrison’s writings and interpreted them in the wider context of the historiography of American evangelicalism, as well as that of mainline Methodism. This long-awaited project demonstrates the broad and lasting influence of Morrison in perpetuating the message of holiness.

Grace for All

Clark H. Pinnock and John D. Wagner, editors



\$41.00 (Paperback; 328 pages)

Did Christ atone for the sins of humanity on the cross? Does God desire all people to be saved and direct his grace toward all people for that purpose? There are some Christians following a deterministic paradigm who believe this is not true. A distinguished international panel of scholars examines this controversy as this book strives to uncover the biblical position on salvation.

Our Message to the World

Charlie Fiskeaux, Special Assistant to the President for Financial Affairs

“I look upon all the world as my parish” —John Wesley

The Francis Asbury Society is actively moving forward in taking our message to the world; that is, to people beyond the borders of our nation with the Empower the Nations initiative. The mission is to equip a network of leaders in all nations to reach those in their local communities to:

- Bring times of refreshing and spiritual hope—revival/awakening—through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Provide resources that promote the message of Scriptural holiness, the self-giving love of God.
- Offer support, encouragement, and accountability through discipleship and mentoring groups.

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We are seeking persons who believe in taking the message of Scriptural holiness to all people and are prepared to support these international efforts. Your contributions will enable the proclamation of the message of holiness to persons eager to know and experience full salvation. Details for various methods of giving to the ministries of the Francis Asbury Society are available on our website: www.francisasburysociety.com/support.



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The High Calling—March–April 2023

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